

When I phoned KDSM FOX 17 in Des Moines, Iowa, today, October 18, 2004, I intended to voice my opinion on the handling of campaign advertisement and documentaries which are not truthful in their content and purpose. Instead, I was referred to a pre-recorded message on an answering machine at the corporate office (Sinclair? in Baltimore, MD. I am very concerned about the lack of freedom of the press/freedom of speech that is evident in the media's coverage of the upcoming election and of political issues in general; specifically regarding Sinclair Broadcasting's decision to force their stations to air an anti-Kerry documentary days before the election is a clear example of the dangers of media consolidation.

When large companies control the airwaves, we get more of what's good for the corporate economic bottom line and less of what we need for our democracy. Instead of something produced at "News Central" far away, it's more important that we see real people from our own communities and more substantive news about issues that matter. This is true democracy, enabling the people to be more fully educated and active in the governing of their own lives.

Sinclair's actions show why we need to strengthen media ownership rules, not weaken them. They show why the license renewal process needs to involve more than a returned postcard. Thank you.